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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 000329

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EUN](#) [KPAL](#) [XG](#) [IS](#) [IR](#) [ZI](#) [EZ](#)
SUBJECT: CZECHS ON MARCH 30-31 GYMNICH

REF: STATE 37792

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mike Dodman
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) Czech MFA Deputy Director of CFSP Department Miroslav Kolatek on March 26 said the foreign ministers would discuss the following issues at the Gymnich meeting March 30-31: the Balkans, the Middle East Peace Process, and the EU Neighborhood policy.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Balkans: the focus will be on ensuring unity within the EU, and ensuring unity between the EU and the U.S. The hope is that the EU will be able to send a signal of unity that will discourage Russia from exploiting differences between EU member states on Kosovo. The Czechs will continue to support the Ahtisaari Plan, and also support flexibility for restarting SAA talks with Serbia.

[1](#)3. (C/NF) MEPP: Kolatek said the Czechs welcome the formation of a National Unity Government in Palestine, but note that the platform of the new government does not go far enough. Nevertheless, thanks to personal intervention by FM Schwarzenberg, the Czech government is prepared to give the new government a "chance" to show by its deeds that it is competent and able to function according to international expectations. Thus, the Czechs are adopting a cautious posture, but may be willing to meet with moderate, non-Hamas members of the Unity Government so long as such meetings do not suggest support for Hamas.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Neighborhood Policy: the Czechs generally support the establishment of a financial mechanism that would enable Eastern European countries to apply for EU funds. However, participation by Belarus should be conditioned on meeting previously established criteria reflecting political change.

[1](#)5. (U) FM Schwarzenberg will not attend the lunch on the second day.
GRABER